

# Inhalation sedation - under 16 years old

Information for parents or those with  
parental responsibility for children and  
young people aged under 16 years old



## **What is inhalation sedation?**

The child in your care may benefit from dental treatment under inhalation sedation. This will help them feel less anxious, slightly drowsy and more relaxed for dental treatment. Inhalation sedation does not make the child unconscious. They remain awake but may feel warm and detached. Their memory of the treatment afterwards may be slightly reduced.

Inhalation sedation means that they will breathe a mixture of nitrous oxide and oxygen from a nosepiece placed on the nose. This will have a relaxing effect.

## **Benefits and risks of inhalation sedation**

Inhalation sedation is used to reduce anxiety and fear of dental treatment and can help your child to cooperate. This is particularly helpful if the child is having a longer, uncomfortable or more complicated procedure or if they are anxious. It is a widely used technique.

The dentist and members of the dental team are trained to give sedation. They watch the child closely and treat any problems that may develop. The nitrous oxide is completely breathed out of the body within 30 minutes of the end of the treatment. This means that the child can recover very quickly from this type of sedation.

The dentist will give the child some oxygen at the end of the sedation to help prevent the child feeling a bit sick or having a headache.

## What to expect

It is usual to have two or more appointments. At the first appointment (assessment), the dentist will take a full dental history of the child. Various methods of providing the dental treatment with or without sedation will be explained. Sometimes the child may try the sedation at this visit. The treatment may take place at subsequent appointments.

If it is agreed that dental treatment with inhalation sedation is the best way to treat the child, then the dentist will confirm the child's medical history. If further information is required, the child's general medical practitioner or specialist will be contacted.

## How to prepare your child

Before the appointment, the child in your care can eat normally but **with only a light meal being taken up to two hours before the appointment.**

**Please give the child any routine medicines as normal. Any medicines or inhalers that the child may need should be brought to the dental treatment appointment.**

**Written consent will be required from the person with parental responsibility before any treatment can be given to the child.** If you have agreed and signed the consent form at the assessment appointment, and you are then unable to attend on the day of the treatment, the child must be accompanied by a responsible adult (over 18 years of age).

The child should wear loose, comfortable clothing. No valuables should be brought to the appointment.

**If the child is unwell on the day with cold/flu symptoms, a blocked nose or any contagious illness, please contact the dentist for advice.** The appointment may need to be rearranged.

Please **avoid bringing other children with you on the day of the appointment.**

**If you as the accompanying adult, or your adolescent child may be pregnant, please inform the dentist before the appointment.**

## What will happen during the sedation?

During the procedure, the child will breathe the nitrous oxide and oxygen through a nosepiece. They may feel warm with tingly fingers and toes.

Once they are sedated, and feel relaxed, the dentist can use local anaesthetic paste to numb the site of the treatment, any injections that the child may need can then be given through this numbed area to reduce the chance of any discomfort.

When the dental treatment is completed, the nitrous oxide mixture will be stopped and replaced with oxygen. The nosepiece will be taken off, and the child will be sat up in the dentist's chair and will continue to recover fully for a few minutes.

The child will be able to leave the surgery/dental practice once he or she has fully recovered, is alert and is not feeling dizzy.

The child may not participate in organised or active sports for the rest of the day but may be able to return to school. The dentist will discuss this with you.

The child can eat and drink normally after the treatment but care should be taken if areas of the mouth are still numb to avoid lip, cheek or tongue biting. The dentist will explain which pain relief medicines the child may have while recovering and the local analgesia wears off.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask your dentist, or if you have any concerns after treatment please call:

### **Leeds Dental Institute Sedation Unit**

Telephone Sedation Unit reception on **(0113) 343 1168** or switchboard on **(0113) 244 0111**

**Normal working hours:** (Monday-Friday 9:00 am -5:00 pm)

Leaflet adapted from Dental Faculties of  
the surgical Royal Colleges and the Royal  
College of Anaesthetists



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Developed by: Suzie Welford StR in Paediatric Dentistry, Katherine O'Donnell  
Consultant - Paediatric Dentistry

Produced by: Medical Illustration Services • MID code: 20230905\_012/JG

LN004333  
Publication date  
01/2025  
Review date  
01/2028